

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MANAGU 01672 091510Z

44

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 AID-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 /057 W

----- 129199

P R 091426Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9689

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 1672

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINS PGOV CU CS NU

SUBJECT: SOMOZA DISCUSSES SECURITY AT PRESS CONFERENCE

SUMMARY: AT APRIL 8 PRESS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT DENOUNCED CUBAN INTERVENTION IN NICARAGUA AS EVIDENCED BY THE ADMITTED PEREGRINATIONS OF A CAPTURED PARTICIPANT IN THE LOS ROBLES AFFAIR. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THE CAPTURE SEVERAL WEEKS AGO OF ONE OF THE TOP FSLN LEADERS, COMMENTED ABOUT THE US COMMITMENT TO NICARAGUA AND PROMISED THAT CENSORSHIP WOULD BE LIFTED FOLLOWING THE CONCLUSION OF THE LOS ROBLES-RELATED TRIALS. END SUMMARY

1. IN 80 MINUTE PRESS CONFERENCE APRIL 8, DIVIDED INTO HALF-HOUR OF PREPARED ANNOUNCEMENTS AND THE REMAINDER FOR SOME FAIRLY UNINHIBITED QUESTIONING, PRESIDENT SOMOZA DISCUSSED A BROAD RANGE OF TOPICS INCLUDING THE EXTERNAL THREAT TO NICARAGUA REPRESENTED BY CUBA AND INTERNAL SECURITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 MANAGU 01672 091510Z

2. SOMOZA OPENED WITH A STATEMENT THAT THE DECLARATIONS

BEFORE THE MILITARY COURT OF INVESTIGATION OF JAVIER CARRION, THE CAPTURED PARTICIPANT IN THE FSLN ATTACK AT LOS ROBLES (SEPTEL), PROVIDED FURTHER EVIDENCE THAT INTERNAL SUBVERSION WAS SPONSORED BY OUTSIDE FORCES. HE ARGUED THAT IN A POLICE STATE LIKE CUBA, CARRION, A FUGITIVE FROM A TERRORIST INCIDENT, WAS ALLOWED TO TRAVEL TO EASTERN EUROPE AND BACK, OBTAIN A FALSE COSTA RICA PASSPORT AND SLIP BACK INTO NICARAGUA. SOMOZA SAID THAT CARRION WAS ENGAGED IN TRAINING FSLN ADHERENTS WHEN CAPTURED AND THAT THIS WAS PROBABLY AT THE ORDERS OF CUBA. DENOUNCING CUBA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD CARRION AS A BREACH OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF NATIONS, SOMOZA CHARGED THAT THERE WAS A PREMEDITATED PLAN TO SUBVERT ORDER IN NICARAGUA, BUT THAT NICARAGUA WAS PREPARED TO MEET THE CHALLENGE.

3. IN ANSWER TO A DIRECT QUESTION, SOMOZA ADMITTED THAT THE GON HAD TAKEN INTO CUSTODY TOMAS BORGE, CHIEF OF THE FSLN URBAN COMMAND, FOLLOWING A MANAGUA GUN BATTLE SOME WEEKS AGO. UNDER FURTHER QUESTIONING ABOUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO BORGE, SOMOZA HEATEDLY REPLIED THAT HE, THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC, HAD SAID THAT BORGE WOULD BE JUDGED ACCORDING TO LAW AND THAT NICARAGUA WAS NOT CUBA WHERE OPPONENTS TO THE REGIME ARE SHOT AUTOMATICALLY AFTER A SHOW TRIAL.

4. ASKED WHETHER HE BELIEVED THAT THE US WOULD FULFILL ITS SECURITY COMMITMENTS TO NICARAGUA IN CASE NICARAGUA BECAME THE OBJECT OF CUBAN MILITARY INTERVENTION, SOMOZA HESITATED FOR SEVERAL SECONDS AND THEN ANSWERED SIMPLY "I AM NOT A USG EMPLOYEE. I CANNOT ANSWER." PRESSED AS TO WHETHER NICARAGUA WOULD MAKE A FORMAL PROTEST ABOUT CUBA'S ALLEGED ACTS OF AGGRESSION TOWARD NICARAGUA, SOMOZA SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE MORE CONCRETE EVIDENCE BEFORE MAKING ANY FORMAL PROTESTS. HIS TASK RIGHT NOW, HE DECLARED, WAS TO SOUND THE ALARM TO NICARAGUANS ABOUT CUBAN INTENTIONS.

5. SOMOZA AGREED WITH A POSTULATION THAT ANTI-NICARAGUAN FOREIGN PRESS CAMPAIGNS HAD BEEN UNLEASHED IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS BUT SEEMED TO DOUBT THAT IT WAS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 MANAGU 01672 091510Z

DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH THE CAPTURE OF TOMAS BORGE. HE OBSERVED THAT NICARAGUA'S WELL-KNOWN ANTI-COMMUNIST POSITION DISPLEASED THE COMMUNISTS AS WELL AS INSPIRING OTHER ANTI-COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS. HE HINTED THAT THE COMMUNISTS WERE SENDING PEOPLE TO NICARAGUA TO PROVOKE THE AUTHORITIES FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES.

6. QUESTIONED ABOUT CENSORSHIP IMPOSED

SINCE THE LOS ROBLES ATTACK 16 MONTHS AGO, SOMOZA REPLIED THAT THE MATTER HAD BEEN EXAMINED AT LENGTH DURING A JANUARY CABINET MEETING AND A CONSENSUS EMERGED THAT FULL LIBERTIES COULD NOT BE RESTORED WHILE NICARAGUA FOUND ITSELF IN THE MIDST OF A CONSPIRACY. HE DID PROMISE, HOWEVER, THAT THE STATE OF SIEGE, INCLUDING CENSORSHIP, WOULD BE LIFTED AS SOON AS THE TRIALS STEMMING FROM THE LOS ROBLES ATTACK WERE COMPLETED. HE ADDED THAT HE HOPED THAT NICARAGUA WOULD BE ABLE TO ENJOY THE RESTORED LIBERTIES--- "AND NOT LOSE THEM AGAIN."

7. COMMENT: SOMOZA IS OBVIOUSLY INTENT ON SENSITIZING HIS COUNTRY TO THE DANGER OF CUBAN INTERVENTION THROUGH LOCAL SUBVERSIVES. WHILE APPEARING VERY CONFIDENT OF HIS ABILITY TO HANDLE THE KIND OF INSURGENCY PRESENTED UP UNTIL NOW, THE ONLY TIME DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE WHEN HIS COMPOSURE SEEMED TO ESCAPE HIM WAS WHEN HE DISCUSSED US INTENTIONS.

8. SOMOZA'S RESPONSE TO THE CENSORSHIP INQUIRY IS THE SAME THAT HE HAS BEEN GIVING PRIVATELY FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. HOWEVER, HIS APPENDAGE STRUCK A SOMEWHAT OMINOUS NOTE ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR PRESS LIBERTIES OVER THE LONGER HAUL. THEBERGE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NATIONAL SECURITY, PRESS CONFERENCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: blochd0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MANAGU01672
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760135-0162
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760479/aaaacout.tel
Line Count: 139
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: blochd0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2004 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <25 OCT 2004 by blochd0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOMOZA DISCUSSES SECURITY AT PRESS CONFERENCE SUMMARY: AT APRIL 8 PRESS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT DENOUNCED
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PGOV, CU, CS, NU, (SOMOZA, ANASTASIO)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006